

palestine perspectives

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The immediate issue in Lebanon is not Syrian missiles, which initially were introduced after Israel had shot down two Syrian helicopters and killed their crew, but whether Israel should be allowed, on the one hand, to create conditions for the dismemberment of Lebanon, and on the other, to bomb at will Palestinian refugee camps.

As usual with other of its escalations of violence, Israel's latest activities in Lebanon, coming as they did on April 28 with the downing of the helicopters, precisely at a time when Syria and rightist factions were reportedly close to an agreement on a ceasefire, is designed to prevent conditions for reconciliation and reconstruction in the country.

There is universal belief that the United States government is more than partially to blame for the crisis. Recent statements by various of its officials dealing with "hot pursuit" by Israel and "brutality" by Syria, have been instrumental in encouraging Begin's latest aggression. This aggression, apart from its cost in loss of hundreds of innocent lives, is already paving the way for all out war. Israel, it would seem, is prepared to go to any length — genocide, murder, concussion bombs, torture — in pursuit of the illusive goal of destroying the Palestinians as a nation, as a people and as a movement. For that is precisely what these latest happenings in Lebanon are rooted in.

For the last 33 years, ever since the Israeli entity was established in Palestine, Israeli policy makers have committed themselves, in a somber way, to the practice of mistaking, misjudging and misreading the historical dynamic of the Palestinian struggle, and the inextricable link this struggle has to the class, regional, national and international forces at play in the Arab world.

No one has gone wrong underestimating the intelligence of Israeli decision makers; but Israel's recent attacks on Lebanon — part of an ongoing process since 1968 — would indicate that there has not been enough underestimating. For Israel has moved from mistaking, misjudging and misreading to the repose of illusion. The illusion in this case, is that the Palestinians could be wiped out in Lebanon, their will to fight could be broken and Israel could then be free to impose its expansionist designs on Palestine. (Israel's "justification" for wanting Syria's defensive missiles removed is that these "will interfere with and thwart" Israel's raids against Palestinians in Lebanon.) This is one of the many concentric circles of conflict that Lebanon has become a theatre for.

Israel's Barbarities in Lebanon

By destroying P.L.O. forces in the country, the Israeli argument goes, then the military, political, economic and social structure of Palestinian society, in and outside Palestine, would disintegrate. With this disintegration, the Palestinians would become leaderless, powerless and helpless, fair game for the imposition of any settlement.

There is nothing new in this Israeli illusion. Israel's fiercely genocidal attacks on Palestinians in Lebanon since 1968 attest to this. What is new is that, failing to subdue, even to weaken the P.L.O. all these years by its repeated attacks, Israel recently began to fight them by proxy — through its fascist allies, the Phalangists, who, like puppets on a string, have been doing Israel's dirty work for it.

The Israeli-fascist alliance, strengthened greatly since Israel turned large chunks of territory to Saad Haddad's forces in the south, seeks the primary aim of destroying the Palestinians and the secondary aim of de-Arabizing Lebanon by establishing there a puppet Phalangist "state" subservient to Israel and ready to do its bidding. This neither the Lebanese nor adjacent Syria could tolerate.

Today Lebanon has become, whether by historical imperative or not, an indivisible part of the Palestine conflict. Its destiny has become so interwoven with the destiny of

Palestine that it is difficult to see how a solution to the problems of the one could be achieved without the other. This transformation, in a dialectical sense, represents a strengthening of the political, tactical and military resources of the Palestinian revolution. If before, the Palestinians fought alone, today they fight with another people — against the same enemy, for the same cause, in the same battle.

Never in the long history of military conflict between the Israeli army and the Palestinian guerrillas has the former won a single battle. In all their one-to-one military confrontations with Israel, the Palestinians have always emerged as the victor — from the battle of Karameh in 1968 to the war of the south of Lebanon in 1978. Nor, for that matter, can it be said that Israeli occupation, notorious for its brutalities, has been able to subdue or break the national will of the Palestinians living under it.

Should Israel invade Lebanon again, it will surely be made a very "hot" pursuit indeed. The only kind of battle Israel will win there will be the cowardly kind of battle it has become well known for all these years — the battle of killing civilians by concussion bombs from the air. Against the Palestinian revolution, and the Lebanese national movement, they have no hope, ever, of scoring any victories.

Dear Editor:

While I agree with your editorial, "A Lesson for Any Mediator" (March 1981, Vol. III, No. 11), it says nothing about what I suspect is new policy regarding Israel and the Arabs. It is reflected in Ronald Reagan's apparent decision to do nothing about Arab/Israel affairs for a period of time. More to the point, I suspect that this is really a policy to look the other way as long as possible in order to allow the Israelis to complete their settlement plans on the West Bank so that the "fact" of settlements will become even more difficult to deal with, and therefore avoidable by U.S. Governments.

For the last year or so, I have become convinced that the only weapon the Arabs have that gains our attention is oil, and that unless oil is used as a weapon to get our attention, we shall do nothing about the

problem that is central to Arab concerns and interest, the creation of a State of Palestine. It is, of course, possible that we actually would invade Saudi Arabian oil fields, but surely this will fail to do anything but to lose whatever influence the U.S. now has in that country, to stimulate a wave of sabotage of installations in oil producing countries and elsewhere, and to shake the whole foundation of American relations with Arabs and the rest of the third world. Maybe that is what it is going to take for us to realize that we are integrally a part of the injustice that is being perpetrated upon the Palestinians in support of out-of-control Israeli expansionism.

Lee Dinsmore,
Elcho, Wisconsin

A PARTIAL LIST OF ISRAELI/ISOLATIONIST ATTACKS ON LEBANON IN APRIL AND MAY 1981.

DATE:	ISRAELI ATTACKS:	CASUALTIES:
March 31	Israeli terrorist raid on Tyre. Israeli artillery bombardment of Tyre, Nabatiyeh, Aishiyeh regions.	One civilian killed, five wounded.
April 1	Israeli shelling of residential areas in Al-Bass and Rashideyeh.	13 civilians wounded, including 10 children when a school bus was hit.
April 3-4	Israeli terrorist squad dynamites eight houses. Israeli bombardment of Sidon.	Six civilians killed, a dozen wounded.
April 6	Israeli bombardment of Tyre and Palestinian refugee camps.	23 civilians killed, 75 wounded, 100 homes destroyed.
April 10	Israeli war planes, artillery and naval vessels continue attacks on Tyre, and South Lebanon.	11 civilians killed and wounded
	Israeli planes bomb Delhamia area.	Three civilians wounded, houses destroyed.
April 14-20	Israeli shelling of Sidon.	16 civilians killed 35 wounded.
April 21	Israeli artillery and rocket bombardments of Aishiyeh, Rihan, Nabatiyeh and Tyre.	One civilian killed, two wounded.
	Intensive Israeli bombardment of the Horsh Nabi Taher area using U.S.-supplied cannister anti-personnel shells. Three shells fell on Sidon.	Heavy damage. Several civilians killed and many wounded.
April 25	Heavy artillery bombardments by Israeli and its rightist allies of Nabatiyeh, Beaufort Castle and Jarmaq.	Many civilians casualties.
April 25-27	Intensive bombing, shelling by Israeli artillery, airforce and warships on the Nahatiyeh and Sidon areas.	28 civilians killed, over 200 wounded
April 27	Israeli warplanes attack North Sidon and Nabatiyeh.	
April 28	Israeli artillery attacks on Nabatiyeh, Rihan, Kfar Rumman, Al-Jarmaq Rashidiya, al-Bass, and Burj-al-Shemali.	22 killed and wounded
	Israeli Kfir and Skyhawk fighter-bombers attack Sidon, Tyre and Nabatiyeh.	75 casualties; more than 45 buildings destroyed, including a home for the elderly, a Catholic school and many homes.
	Israeli/rightist shelling of West Beirut; Arab University and Palestine News Agency offices hit.	Two killed, four wounded
April 29	Israeli warplanes raid cities and towns in South Lebanon.	Heavy civilian casualties.
May 11	Lebanon rightist shelling of Sabra, Shatila, Fukhami and Rawass areas of Beirut.	60 killed and wounded.
May 11	Israeli shelling of Arnoun, Tibnit and Beaufort Castle areas of South Lebanon.	Number of casualties unknown.
May 18	Israeli bombing of Nabatiyeh, Arnoun and Beaufort regions.	Seven killed
May 19	Israeli /rightist shelling in Beirut.	29 civilians killed, over 130 wounded.
May 20	Israeli shelling of Sidon, Aishiya and Rihan.	12 wounded; extensive property damage.
May 25-27	Almost continuous Israeli/rightist shelling of Nabatiyeh, Aishiyeh and Beaufort Castle regions.	Number of casualties unknown.
May 28	50 Israeli warplanes (U.S.-supplied Phantoms and F-15's) bomb Damour and Nabatiyeh. Israeli terrorist raid near Sidon. Shelling of South Lebanese villages and towns.	Eight killed and 14 wounded in Damour; heavy damage to roads and homes.

Beirut, May 1981

by Ghassan Bishara

Suddenly shop owners close their shops. Vendors pack their fruits, vegetables and shoes. Taxi drivers curse their shortened work day. Shells scream in all directions overhead, and as the city rumbles, all movement in it ceases.

Beirut, which was once known to shun sleep is lifeless at 7 PM. The radio tells us the results of the fighting: 25 dead 70 wounded. Israel is shelling and bombing the South Lebanese towns of Nabatiyeh, Tyre and Rashidiyeh. The night has just begun. Already today, Israeli shelling has killed 16 people in Sidon and caused much destruction.

But that's not all. Radio Lebanon tells of fighting in Zahle. Thirty shells fell on Beirut Airport, officially closing Lebanon's contact with the outside world. Later, it is said that the airport is officially open, by order of the President of the Republic. But it is closed in reality, due to physical damage and fear of more shelling.

At midday, on a warm sunny day, the skies open up with thousands of rounds of what later is identified as anti-aircraft fire. All eyes look up to see the Israeli Air Force reminding the Palestinians, Syrians and progressive Lebanese that their arrogant watchful eye is just above, and reassuring Israel's Lebanese allies of Israeli support.

The humiliation which Arabs feel under these raids contrasts ridiculously with the way Arab governments celebrate their masters in the West and the U.S. During these very raids, the hand of British Prime Minister Thatcher is being kissed all over the Arab world and she is laden with their expensive gifts. The royalties of the Gulf cannot be humiliated over what is occurring in Lebanon. They are too busy securing a commodity which has more value to them than human life, the Arab nation or Israel's total disregard for 150 million Arabs. They are looking for ways to ensure the most orderly flow of cheap oil.

The kings and generals of Arabia must reward the West for its concern for the lives of Arab people in Lebanon. These Arab kings and generals are entrusted with Western economic and industrial money. This of course, takes precedence over Israel's humiliation of the Arab nation and definitely over what happens in Lebanon. Who can blame these Arab leaders for their unmistakable preference. After all, what is more important?



Repairing Palestine News Agency Office, shelled on April 28.

The hotel clerk tells me: "It is preferable not to go out on a night like this." It is only 7 PM, and Bliss Street is quiet, totally empty of people and cars. Only dogs, cats and rats--no one's target, lucky them!--roam the streets. But the quiet is so tense that a dog's search for a meal in a trash can sounds as loud as gunfire.

In the hotel lobby, a British journalist sits with others. We exchange smiles, having met in Damascus. He talks of the Syrian fire, the Phalangist fire, the closed airport. A British filmmaker tells of crying during the Israeli bombing of Rashidiyeh which forced her and her crew into a bomb shelter for several hours. We agree: Israel is the cause of all this. Lebanon's privileged minority is fighting to maintain what it once wrongly secured. It is a minority, and without the Israelis would have recognized its own limitations long ago and given up without such a stubborn fight. Israel is a factor which must be considered at all times.

We agree: Israel is not involved to save Lebanon's Christians. Doesn't Israel blame Christianity for the past misery of Jews? Didn't it expel the inhabitants of two Christian villages in 1948? Do Israeli shells distinguish between mosques and churches in Tyre and elsewhere? It is the Palestinian people's unwilling presence in Lebanon and their determination to correct the wrong done to them in 1948 which is the common denominator for both Zionist Israel and Zionist Lebanese factions.

As a result of their historical experience, the Palestinians have inherently taken the progressive side of the Lebanese conflict. Progressive Lebanese stand with the Palestinians. Israel, also for inherent reasons, stands on the opposing side, which it has nurtured and supported.

A French journalist explains his government's stand on the side of 'Christian' Phalangists in Zahle as election maneuvering. "The present administration," he says, "was forced to take this stand by the socialist leader Francois Mitterand." Can the Palestinians benefit from any election in the world?

One in the morning. A powerful explosion awakens everyone in the hotel. Some venture onto balconies to see what has happened. It is too dark to see clearly, but it seems that a nearby house has been hit by a shell and its inhabitants hurt. It is not a dog rummaging in a trash can.

Why doesn't the West, which created Israel, the source of all troubles in the region, feel any guilt for the Lebanese and Palestinians? Is it so difficult to imagine that the whole region -- and with it perhaps the whole world -- is heading towards an explosion which may bury it?

Abu Iyad, Fateh Central Committee member, said at the 15th Palestine National Council in Damascus: "Palestinian guns could be used within the territory of Arab regimes" in order to bring pressure on Western systems, to bring simple justice to the Palestinian people and to save Lebanon.

It could save Arab, and Israeli, lives in the long run if the Palestinians make clear to the Arab oil producers, and in turn to the Western governments, their determination to reach an acceptable solution, no matter how high the price. In desperation people commit desperate acts. The Palestinians and Lebanese are crying out for justice. Someone had better listen.

March on The Pentagon



Over 300 Palestinians and their supporters joined an estimated 100,000 anti-war demonstrators in Washington D.C. on May 3. On the clear Sunday morning, thousands of people arrived from all over the country to march on the Pentagon. The largest protest in a decade demanded: "Money for Jobs and Human Needs, Not for the Pentagon," "No U.S. Intervention in El Salvador or Southern Africa," "Stop Racist Violence, End Racism and Repression," "End Sexism, Lesbian and Gay Oppression," "Stop the Draft," "Defend Atlanta's Children, Not El Salvador's Junta."

The Palestine Information Office and Palestine Congress of North America joined over 400 organizations and individuals endorsing the March on the Pentagon. The Palestine Information Office circulated a letter encouraging supporters of the Palestinian cause to join the protest. "The Reagan administration wants to station U.S. military forces, the Rapid Deployment Force, in the Middle East. U.S. Secretary of State Alexander Haig travelled to the Middle East recently to try to convince the

Arab countries to accept U.S. troops in the region to counter 'Soviet imperialism.' All the Arab leaders he saw told him: the source of the conflict in the Middle East is *not* the Soviet Union. It is the continuing Israeli occupation of Palestine and other Arab land, and Israel's vicious aggression against the people and territory of Lebanon."

The Palestine contingent came near the beginning of the 4-hour-long march. Calling out their unequivocal support for the PLO and independence and justice for the Palestinian people, the group drew links between the struggle in El Salvador and the Middle East with chants such as "Israel out of Lebanon/U.S. out of El Salvador/No Intervention/No More War!"

During the rally at the Pentagon, Dr. Samih Farsoun joined many other noted speakers. Dr. Farsoun, Chairman of the Palestine Congress in North America, said: "The aspirations of the Palestinians and the fulfillment of their national and human rights represent the only hope for peace in the Middle East. Like the people of El Salvador, these rights will not be achieved easily, and

are deeply threatened by the rise of U.S. intervention and militarism. It should alarm the whole world to see counter insurgency, U.S. military bases and the so-called Rapid Deployment Forces offered as a solution to the aspirations of the people of the Middle East."

Dr. Farsoun, in the spirit of struggle and hope which characterized the demonstration, further reminded the thousands listening of the ongoing suffering of Palestinians and Lebanese civilians being killed and maimed by Israeli bombs and air raids even as he spoke. He especially emphasized the children: "It is for these children we must continue to work together for a future free from war, from occupation and domination, from poverty and inequality. It is for these children we march today, and we will continue to work and fight for tomorrow — for the children of Palestine, the children of El Salvador, the children of Atlanta." At the end of Dr. Farsoun's speech, perhaps for the first time in the U.S., many thousands of voices raised over and over to shout "LONG LIVE PALESTINE".

Below is an excerpt from 'Abbad al-Shams (The Sunflower)' by Sahar Khalifeh, noted West Bank novelist.

Perhaps by reading fiction, an outsider can grasp a better understanding of the meaning of the land to the lives and future hopes of the tillers of the fields.

Sahar Khalifeh is better known as a champion of women's rights. Her writing has strong and realistic woman characters and Sahar herself is sought out to expound on subjects relating to women in Palestinian

The car wound its way through the narrow, rutted paved road. There was no sign of life in the land of rocks and olives, only mounds and hills and patches of land which once had held green crops now ploughed over by machines, the greenness mingling with the red soil and the blood of peasants.

For the second year the peasants had insisted on cultivating this area. Last year airplanes had hovered in the sky, exuding poisonous chemicals which killed the crops and the life throbbing in people's hearts. Winter arrived and washed the land as well as people's hearts, restoring to them their love of life; so they planted the land once more. Just before the harvest season, machines came, advancing from the West, and dug their teeth in the belly of the earth, turning the land upside down. Army vehicles swarmed the area like locusts. By order of the military governor, thousands of dunams were confiscated, and the settlers' vehicles steered their way to the new settlement in the Promised Land. The peasants waved their land registration certificates, and the military governor took the papers to establish their authenticity, which he had not established until now.

On the summit of the mountain barracks were erected and inhabited by peaceful citizens who performed their prayers for the souls of the victims of Nebuchadnezzar, standing in tightly-packed lines and swaying to the rhythm of the chants, thanking the Lord for restoring the glory of the children of Israel on the remains of the intruders in the Middle East. The peasant children hurled their stones. One stone hit a settler's cap; so the settler took out his gun and killed a boy, then went back to his prayers in piety and peace.

A barricade blocked the narrow road, and the smoke of burning tires eliminated visibility, and hid the path. Khadrone, an Israeli leftist who was taking a group of foreign journalists to the site of riots in Nablus and a neighboring village, parked the car away from the street by an olive tree, and they all continued on foot in the direction of the village.

society. Her recent novel, she says, "was criticized by many men who consider themselves progressive and patriotic." She has harsh words for her critics: "If I would have written about the alienation of labourers they would have all clapped their hands, but I wrote about the alienation of women. They do not understand this, nor do they want to."

Hanan Mikhael-Ashrawi selected and translated this passage. This is reprinted from *Al-Fajr*.

The mukhtar's house is the usual gathering place for people with grievances. The maternal and paternal aunts of the boy who was killed were asking for revenge. Some peasants were seeking the restoration of their land registration certificates from the military governor. An old man in his seventies was kneeling on the ground, sprinkling his face with dust and wailing, "The land — the labor of a lifetime and the hard work of my children in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia and the livelihood of the family, the land was confiscated and fenced off. The house was demolished by bulldozers and razed to the ground. And now they pursue me demanding payment."

Khadroun wondered, "Payment?"

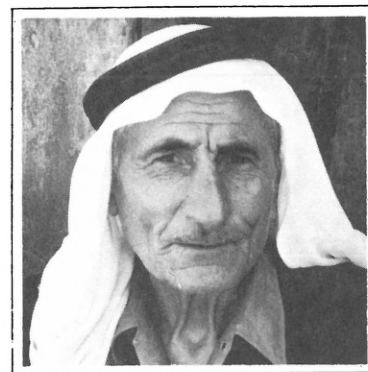
"The bulldozer's rent, my son, and the driver's wages."

Khadroun struck his forehead with his open palm in utter disbelief. Salem made a side remark to the effect of "stop pretending or play-acting." Abdul-'Izz raised a warning finger in Salem's face. The latter turned and announced his intention to urinate.

They all sat on the ground, each holding a notebook and a pencil, recording the scattered stories and events. The mukhtar's coffee was served to all the reporters along with an invitation to meet with the mukhtar in the upper room guest house. The foreign reporters rushed to the upper room, their eyes registering every detail: swarming flies, tattered clothes, an ignorant mukhtar. Such are the Arabs and such is their case. Do they really deserve the land? Do they deserve to live in the first place? They exchanged glances and repeated in Arabic the traditional platitude "shukran," meaning "thank you." The mukhtar smiled gratefully and ordered them another round of coffee.

They drank their second cups, their eyes still registering important details and the symptoms of the problem. They asked the mukhtar about his political opinions, and he answered profusely through an interpreter. They asked him about the West and he said that Britain was the source of the curse. One of them tried to convince him that had it not been for Britain the Middle East would have remained ignorant and backward and

Sahar Khalifeh:



totally illiterate. They provoked his memory and he related the stories of the hangings, of Red Tuesday, the jug and the whippings, atrocities committed by the British against the Palestinian Arabs during the mandate. They said that without the British and the Americans, things would have been much worse. He flew into a rage and asked what could be worse. They misunderstood his rhetorical tone, thinking that an answer was called for, and they proceeded to explain and enlighten. Still, he disappointed them and continued his reminiscences about the British and the nooses and the blowing up of houses.

He said that the Jews had in them good teachers. The Jews demolish a house and demand rent for the use of the bulldozer, while the British used to hang a man and refuse to deliver his body to his family unless they paid them for the use of the noose — five pounds in cash was the rent of the hanger and the fine of the hanged. The reporters tried to discuss with him issues pertaining to world politics and he silenced them with a flood of little stories about the peasants. His voice grew hoarse and loud as he fired at them a full blast of his anguish. They wrote in their notebooks important remarks about the Arabs' volatile temperament and uncontrolled emotionalism.

They asked, and what about the USA? He said that it was even filthier and that the Western powers vie with each other in their dirty dealings. Dirty? And they looked at the flies and at the faces of the children lined up at the door watching the foreigners and they wrote about the squalor of the East. In the meantime the Western-imported bulldozers continued demolishing homes and people's hearts.

They asked him, and what about the autonomy plan? He answered that he was just a simple mukhtar and that he does not deal in matters of politics and government. He told them that they had better ask the educated young men; then he turned to a young man sitting at the end of the room and told him, "Speak, Jaber."

Literature That Reflects People's Needs



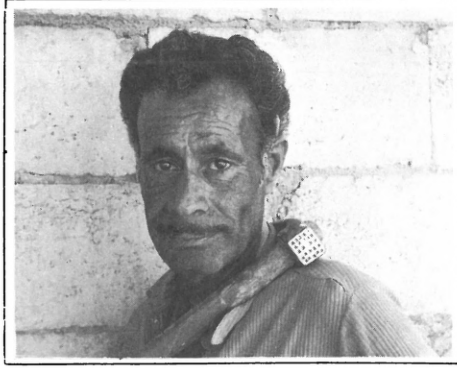
Jaber expounded at length. He discussed imperialism, oppressed peoples, the third world — and the first and the second. He mentioned socialism, human rights, and the revolution of the oppressed majority. The reporters gave each other meaningful glances and asked: "Will your state, then, be communist, receiving orders from Moscow?" With mounting disgust he answered: "We'll receive orders from no one." They considered his denial a negation of the truth and wrote in their notebooks that his mini-state will be a threat to the free, democratic world and will constitute a Soviet spear-head in the Middle East.

They directed another question at Jaber who fell silent and refused to answer. They recorded in their notebooks objective impressions about the Arabs' ill-manners, obstinacy and lack of cooperation.

They turned back to the mukhtar and asked him his opinion about the autonomy plan. He answered: "Ask the Palestine Liberation Organization." They said: "But you're the mukhtar and you're the one living here." He repeated tirelessly; "Ask the PLO." One of the reporters picked up a new, related line and asked a profound question: "What rule and what occupation allow people such freedom of expression?" Jaber jumped up and announced: Let's then salute the occupation and toast it with more coffee and tea.

The mukhtar complied by ordering more coffee. The reporters filled their notebooks with further objective impressions about the primitive Arab trait of unlimited hospitality and generosity. For the third time they drank their coffee and said "shukran" in Arabic. So the mukhtar's gallantry was aroused and he invited them to lunch, swearing the greatest oaths. They accepted the invitation with a smile.

Beneath the upper room, Al-Balad's reporters were still sitting on the floor among the people with their grievances, writing down stories and incidents and collecting data. Suddenly, screaming broke out from beyond the field fence. Everybody froze for a few moments, then the reporters resumed their writing. The clamor



increased and the fence gate was violently thrust open as another crowd of peasants poured in. Behind them a woman in city clothes came running, a child gripping the hem of her dress, and the peasants' children surrounding her in curiosity.

The woman wailed and called out, "Mukhtar!"

Abul-'Izz jumped up. "Sa'diyya."

She fell on her knees and the child screamed, while the older daughter Sumayya began pulling at her arm and crying.

"Mama, Mama, let's go home."

Sa'diyya began striking her head hysterically.

"What home, you wretch, lost — the land, the world, what home? Everything's lost, my lifetime's work and my widowed years."

She looked at the two familiar faces, and before losing consciousness she whispered: "Abul-'Izz, the land. They took the land."

The world and the faces swam as a peaceful silence enveloped her. The women gathered around her, while the men looked aside. The foreign reporters looked down from the window of the upper room in curiosity. They saw women wrapped in white, filmy cloth, with long dresses and voices that spoke a rough language; the women's hands and faces were also rough, their bodies as they ran making sweeping movements in their flowing robes. They talked and gestured animatedly, as if in a fight. The scene reminded the foreigners of documentary films about strange civilizations and the customs of peoples that were even stranger. The woman lying on the ground was still motionless, as the other women ran here and there. One held a pot from which she sprinkled water on the unconscious woman's face. The maternal and paternal aunts of the murdered child were provoked by the scene and they resumed their wailing and weeping. A woman journalist whispered to her colleague at the window or the upper room: "Zorba the Greek, remember?"

He nodded, still observing the women's violent movements and the wailing women's waving handkerchiefs.



The mukhtar yelled down from his heights, scolding the mourning women. "Stop it, you, and you there, stop it! Where's your modesty, you females? Let's get on with our work!"

The women's voices immediately were hushed. Nothing could be heard except the sound of bare feet shuffling on the floor of the porch like the rustling of dry autumn leaves. When Sumayya pulled at her mother's arm crying, "Get up, Mama, get up," the women scolded her, pointing to the mukhtar's upper room and whispering "The mukhtar, the mukhtar." Sumayya strangled her sobs in her mother's sleeve as the women's fear of the mukhtar was transferred to her and intensified her terror and tears.

Rashad, her brother, was standing among the peasant children surreptitiously wiping his eyes and assuming an adult air of nonchalance. Sa'diyya regained her consciousness and sat up, leaning her head and back on the wall beside the wailing women. Rashad looked around him trying to locate children his own age. As Sa'diyya's head nodded to the rhythm of the lament recalling the memory of her dead husband Zuhdi and her confiscated land and of the past and the future, Rashad took out his slingshot from his pocket and walked out followed by a group of boys.

A molotov cocktail exploded and caught fire behind the fence of the settlements. Several shots were then heard as the soldiers rushed out into all parts of the village. They kicked a few women and slapped a few men at random, then caught a man who was carrying a paper bag of tomatoes and cucumbers and beat him up thoroughly, tearing his muscles and his bag, scattering the vegetables everywhere.

People were rushing before the mukhtar's gate, each trying to reach the safety of his home. The reporters continued peering out windows of the upper room, recording facts and impressions and posing their questions to all those assembled there.

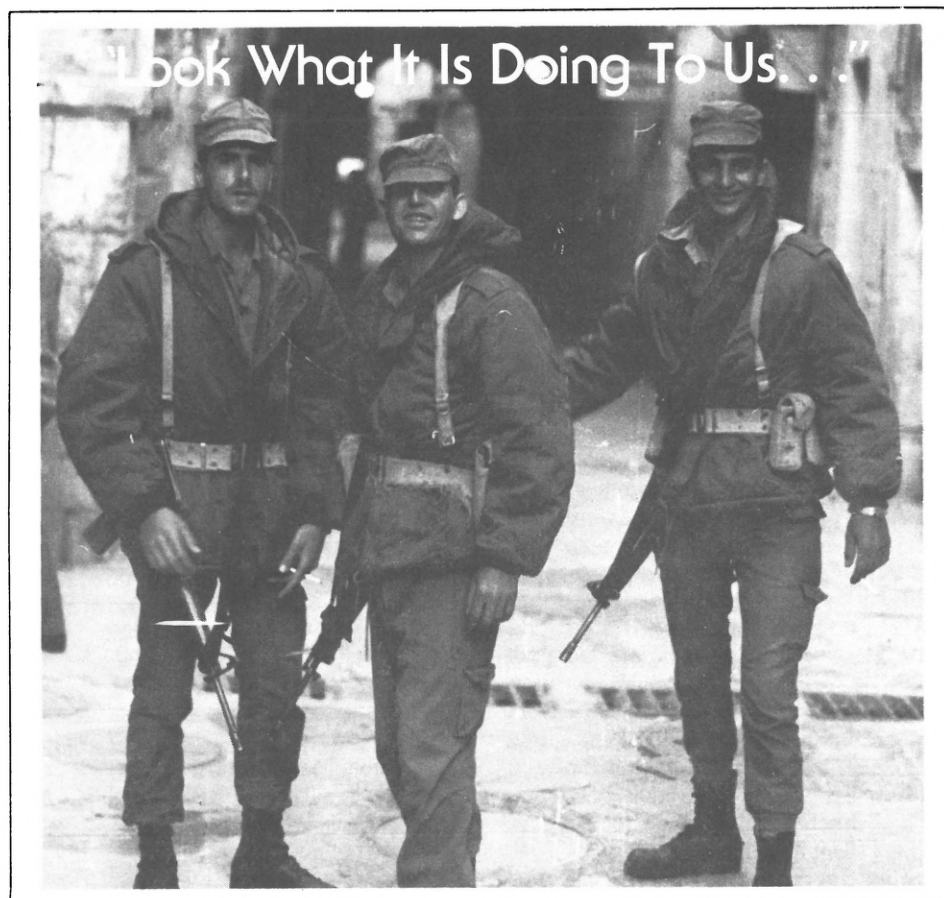
The following is a statement by an Israeli soldier on reserve duty in the 1967 occupied territories. It was first published in the Israeli paper, Ha'aretz of December 26, 1980. It was translated by Israel Shahak, head of the Israeli League for Civil and Human Rights, who is dedicated to exposing the disastrous effects of the Israeli military occupation on both Palestinians and Israelis.

In Gaza in 1969 everything was different, maybe because we were younger then, maybe because it was so soon after the war and it was new. I don't know why, but no one attached sentimental value. We saw and did everything there. After a few days of being there, I swear, they began to fear us like death.

I remember that every time there were troubles in some school they used to call us in. We had these very thin, but powerful clubs, and we would enter the schoolyard forcefully, and immediately all the teachers and students would flee upwards into the classrooms, and then we used to chase them, upstairs, enter the classrooms and start beating them. The section commander would enter the class and ask: "who is the teacher?" The teacher would step up to him and then the commander would deliver a blow at this face, kick him, and shout "Yallah, Everyone home!" And then all the students would gather, frightened, next to the door in order to leave, and we set ourselves up in the hall so that every person passing would be beaten.

After a few incidents like that there were no more troubles in any school, everything quieted down, and we would be certain that we did what had to be done. Don't forget it was only a year and a half after the Six Day War and what we did in Gaza did not seem to us to be so extraordinary in comparison to what we remembered from the war. There may have been other reasons, I don't know exactly but it really looked different then.

And today it looks different. We have the same troubles with the schools. They stand in the schoolyard singing their songs, shouting "Palestine" and all that. First we have to phone the school administration and warn them to put an end to it because otherwise we would be forced to come and end it ourselves. Everytime I go into the school I pray that these students will not throw stones at us, because a whole thing could start, with shootings and casualties and investigations.



I asked the deputy governor why we should care if they sing their songs? Let them sing until their throats run dry. Why should it bother us? But he told me not to bother him with such questions, should we care should we not care, it's a regulation and that's it. Why should we fight these children, because of their songs which we can barely even understand?

Sometimes I hear on the Army wireless system such things that I don't know whether to cry or to laugh. A morning patrol reports that on a wall of some house there is new graffiti.

"What's written there?" the deputy governor asks him.

"I don't know. None of us can understand it."

"Find a local inhabitant and ask him."

Two, three minutes go by and the patrol again reports in:

"Do you really have to know exactly? Its something against us."

"I want to know word for word."

"O.K.: all the Jews ought to get f_____ through the a_____"

You understand. And then a special detachment with erasing tools arrives. Great, we gained another point. True, it's not all a game, relatively speaking everything is quiet here, but one should always take care. When you pass near the

refugee camp here, there is always a chance that some stone will come flying. They constructed a long, tall fence along the road, but the contractor who built it probably made a buck. It's built out of lousy materials and its full of holes. So they can see the command vehicle of the patrol and throw a stone or two. Its not that dangerous. But its still unpleasant. A stone can take your eye out.

And then what do we do? We go into the camp and stop everyone we see, confiscate his I.D. and tell him to run to the Military Government, and they run. Because in the Territories to walk around without any I.D. is not advisable.* So they go to the Military Government and wait until someone talks to them.

About 150 young men are always waiting there, with two or three guards. If the guards are human, nothing will happen. But if they are a bit like animals, with not such good hearts, then petty humiliations begin, antagonizing comments, a slap here, a kick there. And all that before they are even taken into a room and interrogated. What goes on inside, I don't know and I don't want to know.

*Everyone caught without this ID is first beaten on the spot, then arrested and beaten again, then brought before a military court and punished by a heavy fine or imprisonment or both. — I.S.

I tell you it is enough what I saw in this one month of reserves service to make me sick. And what can I do? Refuse to serve in the Territories and go to Military Prison no. 6? This is not a thing for me and it is not the solution. I will try to manage. Next time I will ask instead to do jobs in the base. I don't mind, in place of being there, to sit around filling kitbags with emergency equipment. It's boring, I know, but at least you don't eat your heart out.

I arrived for reserve service two days late, so I didn't reach the right place in the beginning and I was stationed, for the first night, in a different unit. We drove around a town, then suddenly the driver halted the command vehicle. Two guys jumped off and picked up a young man who was walking in the street. What happened, I asked. He swore at us, they tell me. So he swore, what can you do?

They lay him on the floor of the vehicle and drive on. On the way, from both sides, they kicked him in the ribs. I don't know if the kicks were powerful or mild, but they were kicks. Anyway, it hurts. He lay there, tightened up, his hands on his head, didn't shout, didn't cry, just received the blows silently. We drove to Canada Park and dumped him from the vehicle. Let him go back to town by foot.

I have done such things in my life, much worse, believe me, but this time it pissed me off. If these guys were friends of mine, I would have said something. Maybe I wouldn't have let them do it. But I didn't

want to get into trouble with them. It is really difficult for me to judge them. You have no idea what happens to a man once you give him power. Some people just don't know how to use it. They shouldn't be given any. Once you give them power, and hand over to them an easy victim they become animals.

In the second week of reserve duty, one of the guys, Swissa, was stationed with me at the roadblock. He's the kind of guy you like, he's nice. He got permission to sleep in Jerusalem because he is from Jerusalem and his wife is in her ninth month and awaiting to give birth. You should have heard him speaking about her, with such delicacy, like a poet. And he is also a religious Jew. At six in the morning he takes his Tefilin and prays. Then he folds everything back and puts it in the bag.

He takes his gun and walks over to the roadblock and there he becomes a vicious animal. What is a vicious animal? Here it doesn't mean shooting, killing people, torturing them. After all, we are not like that.

But I will give you an example: Let us say a bus comes in from the direction of the city of Jerusalem. He goes up into the bus to check the I.D.'s of Arabs. Now, there are all sorts of identification cards. On one day it's allowed to let in one sort and forbidden to allow in another. He doesn't really know the differences and he decides, according to the look on the person's face whether to allow him in or force him to walk back to town.

Why? Because that is what Swissa wants. I see them alighting from the bus with looks of despair on their faces. They walk back to town, having lost a day's work because that is what Swissa wants, because the power is in his hands. Here there are no newspapers, nor Supreme Courts of Justice and there are no Ombudsmen. Whatever Swissa decides is what counts.

. . . In this whole business with the Territories what hurts me are not the big things that sometimes occur, like accidents: when there is shooting and casualties. What drives me nuts are these little things. The small daily occurrences that happen all the time. The sort of things we are getting accustomed to doing. . . Sometimes while you're out there, you find yourself doing something which seems normal to you. Why not? And suddenly you grab hold of your head. What the hell are you doing?

Maybe in Gaza, in 1969 I didn't care about all of this, because we thought it will take a bit of time and then everything will fall into order. But now after so much time to go again into a schoolyard and again to disperse demonstrations and again these arrests. Maybe, maybe there is no choice, I don't know, but look what it is doing to us. In two years time my son will be called up to regular service. He will also have to do such things.

U.S. Troops Increase In The Middle East

by Chris Robinson

Unknown to the general public, U.S. military forces abroad have vastly increased in strength. When President Carter took office, U.S. troops abroad stood at their lowest total in recent memory. Pentagon statistics dated September 30, 1976, show that there were 413,090 U.S. troops stationed in 106 countries. During Carter's term in office, he increased this total each year until on September 30, 1980, the Pentagon reported 442,782 soldiers stationed in 135 countries.

Part of this increase took place in the Middle East, where Carter added four new host nations for U.S. forces and tripled the U.S. deployment in Egypt and Saudi Arabia. The only country in the area which showed a decrease in U.S. military presence was Bahrain, where the troop level was halved from 129 in 1976 to 66 in 1980.

In the Middle East, U.S. troops increased by 128.8% from a total of 553 in 1976 to 1,265 in 1980. Besides the greater number of troops in every country except Bahrain, Carter

U.S. TROOPS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

	1976	1980
Bahrain	129	66
Egypt	38	495
Israel	59	97
Jordan	18	25
Kuwait	---	22
Lebanon	18	21
Oman	---	5
Saudi Arabia	291	502
Syria	---	12
Yemen (Sana)	---	20
Total	553	1265

(*Statistics from Pentagon report of Active Duty Military Personnel, September 30, 1980. Figures include Marine and other military personnel stationed at U.S. Embassies.)

was able to add Kuwait, Oman, Syria, and Yemen (Sana) as hosts for U.S. troops. These four were among the 29 nations which were induced to host U.S. forces while Carter was in office. There may soon

be an even greater number of U.S. troops in Oman, since that country has agreed to allow the Pentagon to modernize the air and naval bases on Masira Island and the air field at Seeb near the entrance to the Strait of Hormuz.

During this period, a significant reduction in U.S. troops took place in Iran following the overthrow of the Shah in January 1979. Following the Shah's overthrow, most of these troops were expelled from Iran, resulting in only 21 U.S. military personnel remaining in 1980.

The situation in Iran was at least partially responsible for the U.S. buildup elsewhere in the Middle East. The most threatening increases took place in Egypt and Saudi Arabia, where the combined total more than tripled from 329 troops in 1976 to 997 in 1980. This total does not include such temporary deployments of the U.S. Rapid Deployment Force, as the 1,400-man training mission which visited Egypt during November 1980. In Egypt, 88% of the U.S. troops were from the Air Force, while in Saudi Arabia, 57% were U.S. Army soldiers.



Chris Robinson is the editor of Recon Publications in Philadelphia.



Collective Punishment

The parental homes of two Palestinian political prisoners from Silwad, near Ramallah, were sealed by the Israeli military authorities in April. Mohammed Abed Hamed and Rajeh Mahmoud Deeb were arrested in January and were still awaiting trial or sentencing at the beginning of May. Nonetheless, at 9:00 a.m. on April 22, Israeli troops entered and ransacked the two houses, then sealed the doors and windows with concrete. Muhammed Hamed's family is now living in a small kitchen; the 70-year-old father of Mahmoud Deeb is keeping the remaining four children, aged between 11 months and six years, in a one room space.

On May 17, Israeli military forces blew up five homes and damaged several others in Jabalia Camp, Gaza, leaving 75 people homeless. The homeowners refused to leave and slept in the ruins. The families were given only a short time to remove all their belongings, so many of their

belongings were also destroyed. The homes belonged to the families of political prisoners arrested earlier in the month on charges of belonging to Palestinian guerrilla cells.

Arab-Americans Support P.L.O.

The National Association of Arab Americans held its 9th annual convention in San Francisco, on May 7-10. The convention adopted a number of resolutions calling on the U.S. government to stop military aid to Israel and to support Palestinian national rights and to recognize the Palestine Liberation Organization as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. The convention received a message from PLO Chairman Arafat calling on Arab Americans to unite and increase their efforts to defend the Lebanese and Palestinian people who are daily bombed by Israel. He urged them to protest the use of American weapons in these Israeli attacks against civilian areas in South Lebanon, and to oppose the Israeli military occupation of Palestinian lands.

Palestinian Mayors

The Mayors of Hebron and Halhoul, Fahd Kawasme and Mohammad Milhem, expelled by Israeli military authorities last year, toured major American cities in a renewed appeal for their right to return home. In Washington D.C., the two mayors met State Department officials, members of Congress, and American church and civic leaders. Although the U.S. government voted at the U.N. Security Council for their return to their homeland, the State Department has done nothing to pressure Israel to implement this decision.

The Mayors emphasized that they will continue their efforts to return to their

homes and families. At the U.N. they met Secretary General Kurt Waldheim and appealed for the implementation of the Security Council resolution. They also met with a number of American Jewish leaders and found warm support for their cause, and strong criticism for Begin's military policies in the occupied Palestinian territories.

Also during May, Nablus Mayor Bassam Shaka'a was denied a travel permit to the U.S. by the Israeli military authorities. Representative Paul Findley (R-Ill.) sent a telegram of protest to Secretary of State Alexander Haig. The telegram read, in part: "[Mayor Shaka'a] was scheduled to meet with the Chairman of the Europe and Middle East Subcommittee, Congressman Lee Hamilton, and me, as well as other officials and individuals in Washington. This is a totally unjustified attempt to limit Congress' access to firsthand information about the situation in that volatile part of the world. Mayor Shaka'a, of course, suffered a brutal bombing attack that caused him to lose both his legs, and as of yet no one has been prosecuted. Perhaps this fact embarrasses the military government and causes it not to wish to allow Mayor Shaka'a to give a first hand account of what life is like on the West Bank."

TAHGREED AL-BUTMEH SCHOLARSHIP FUND ESTABLISHED

Fifteen Arab-American university students who visited the occupied West Bank, Jordan and Lebanon in the summer of 1980 have announced plans to establish a four-year scholarship at Bethlehem University in the name of Tahgreed al-Butmeh. The day after the Arab-American group arrived in the West Bank, Tahgreed was shot and killed by an Israeli soldier on her way to the university.

The group is seeking funds for the scholarship, which will be slated for a woman student. Tax-deductible donations may be sent to:

**The Middle East Philanthropic
Fund/Tahgreed**
P.O. Box 179—M.I.T. Station
Cambridge, MA 02139

→ The number of U.S. troops in Saudi Arabia increased every year since 1976, beginning long before the overthrow of the Shah in Iran. By 1979, half of all U.S. troops in the Middle East were located in Saudi Arabia. Due to U.S. support of Israel, the Saudis placed limits on the number of U.S. troops and there was no outrageous increase following the revolution in Iran.

Following the events in Iran, U.S. troops in Egypt did increase drastically. Egypt has refused to lease bases to the U.S., but it has offered air and naval bases in support of U.S. intervention forces. This may account for the large number of U.S. Air Force personnel based in Egypt. Troops there may increase in the future since Egypt has agreed to allow the Pentagon to improve the port at Ras Banas on the Red Sea.

Attacks on Students

Al-Fajr newspaper of May 24 carried a photo spread of Palestinian students being beaten by Israeli students, a security guard and a baton-wielding riot policeman at Hebrew University. A Hebrew University disciplinary court recently expelled three Arab students for distributing leaflets, but the same body dropped a case against another student (a Jewish Israeli rightist) who assaulted university staff and property. As *Al-Fajr* points out, "Given such a situation there seems little chance that any Palestinian student — all of them Israeli citizens — who are subject to police, university and rightist student attack, will ever get a fair hearing."



Israel Begins Major Road In South Lebanon

Over the past two weeks, Israeli bulldozers, protected by Israeli forces, have been building a major new road in the eastern sector of the Lebanese frontier strip occupied by Israel since March 1978. However this is no ordinary military road to facilitate patrolling or logistics. Instead, it marks an important step in the planning for large-scale Israeli offensive action in South Lebanon.

The new road is planned to connect the existing road network in the occupied border strip and Israel with the roads leading northwards from the Arqoub region towards Rashaya in the Southern Bika'. Even more importantly, it is being built through a nine-kilometre gap in the deployment of the UNIFIL forces in South Lebanon, to the east, in the Arqoub villages in the foothills of Mount Hermon. Israeli forces have in effect gone around the positions of the U.N. forces. Thus, upon completion of the new road, Israeli troops will be able to speed north along this first-class all-weather road, placing themselves behind the front lines of the joint forces in the Arqoub region, slipping around the UNIFIL forces, and placing themselves squarely in the middle of the forward Syrian defence line in the southern part of the Bika'.

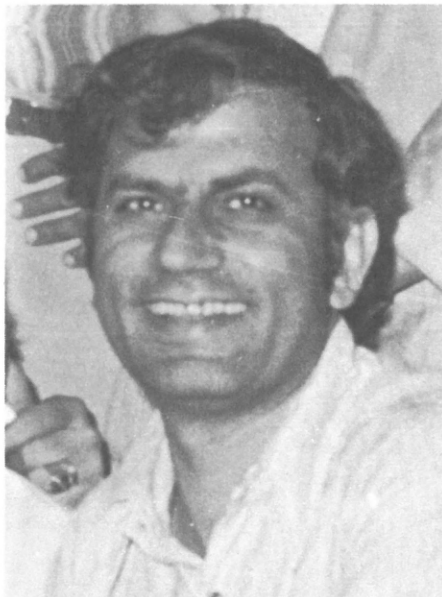
Thus, although there is clearly a lull in Israeli offensive operations in Lebanon — a lull which has not prevented intensive daily artillery bombardment of the Nabatiya region and Beaufort Castle — preparations are underway for the resumption of such operations, but this time on a much larger scale.

Israeli Assassination of P.L.O. Representative

The P.L.O. Representative in Brussels, Dr. Naim Khader, was assassinated on June 1. Five shots were fired at him from a speeding car.

Khader was born in 1939, and received his doctorate in Jurisprudence from the Louvain University. He had been P.L.O. representative in Brussels since 1975, and had become well known at the E.E.C. Headquarters and among diplomats and scholars in the Benelux countries for his persuasive, active and open diplomacy on behalf of the Palestinian cause.

Khader is the latest in a long list of P.L.O. representatives in Europe murdered by the Israeli Intelligence Service. Among them were Paris representatives Mahmoud Al-Hamshari, Essendine Kalak, and Mahmoud Saleh; Rome representative Wael Zuaiter, London representative. Said Hamami, and Abu Al-Kair; and two P.L.O. representatives in Cyprus.



Sharon Colony Tours

Israeli Agriculture Minister Ariel Sharon has organized a major publicity campaign for West Bank settlements. "Operation: We Are On The Map" aims to bring 300,000 Israeli visitors to West Bank colonies before election day on June 30. Sharon's aide, Eli Landau, stated that the tours are inspired by, but not funded or helped directly by the Likud party. Landau also revealed that a U.S. citizen has funded two new organizations, one called the Association for the Prevention of a Palestinian State and the second, the Fund for Study of Judea and Samaria.

Minister Sharon, architect of the Likud settlement plan for the West Bank and Gaza, personally guides the tours of the colonies. In a special tour for 90 foreign journalists, Sharon reportedly produced a map of existing colonies, and projected settlements, with an area of 75% of the West Bank marked off as "vital for Israel's security." At a recent election rally for Begin at the Ari'el colony, Sharon said that the Likud has established 144 colonies in the last four years and that by the end of the next four years he hopes to have "quintupled the number of Jews living in Judea and Samaria."

Za'atar Arrested

Al-Fajr reports that Israeli soldiers, accompanied by employees of the so-called "department of nature guards", broke into many shops in Bethlehem and confiscated large quantities of ground za'atar (thyme) under the pretext that picking green za'atar is forbidden by Israeli military order. The Israeli forces took the owners of these shops to the police station but later released them on bail. The Israelis also searched their houses. Za'atar is a staple Palestinian food for the people, it is eaten with oil and bread.

Israel's New Uzi For Export

The Jerusalem Post International of May 3-9 reports the development of a new version of the Israeli Uzi machine gun. This new weapon, the mini-Uzi, is especially designed for use by special security forces around the world. The new mini-Uzi is easily concealed and is much smaller than the original but is just as powerful, and can be used with a silencer and with a night sight.

Israel has become a major arms exporter to repressive regimes around the world. Over 750,000 full-size Uzis have been sold to over 40 countries. The peoples of Central and South America, and Africa can expect to confront these new weapons of repression in their struggles for freedom and independence.

Don't Forget Ziad

Ziad Abu Eain is still threatened with extradition to Israel. While he waits for the U.S. Supreme Court to hear his case, Ziad can be extradited at any time by order of Secretary of State General Haig. Letters, telegrams and phone calls to Haig are needed to protest Ziad's possible extradition. A petition, circulated by the A.A.U.G., will be delivered to Secretary Haig to show the wide support among Arab-Americans and the American public for Zaid's basic human rights. **MORE SIGNATURES ARE NEEDED** - the petition is available from A.A.U.G., 556 Trapelo Rd., Belmont, MA. 02178.

Voice of Palestine

The Palestine Congress of North America recently announced the beginning of the "Voice of Palestine" telephone service. For the most up-to-date news of the Palestinian people's struggle and the Arab world in general, simply dial (202) 686-9600. The service runs 24 hours a day, seven days a week, in Arabic and English.

AAUG Convention

The Fourteenth Annual AAUG Convention, to be held November 5-7, 1981 at the Hyatt Regency in Houston, Texas, promises an especially noteworthy series of discussions on "The Arabs and Their Institutions: What Future?" This theme proposes a pathbreaking look at Arab societies and states in their institutional dimension: what has been built; what are the possibilities of the present; what are the necessities of the future.

May 15 Commemorated

Palestinian and Arab-American Organizations in major American cities held rallies commemorating the occupation of Palestine and creation of the Zionist state on May 15, 1948. The Palestine Congress of North America, the General Union of Palestinian Students and other organizations in Boston, New York, Washington D.C., Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, Houston, and other cities expressed their opposition to Israeli military occupation, to Zionism and racism. They called on the American people to support the Palestinian people in their struggle for freedom and human dignity and to support the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinians. A number of Palestinian speakers, including PLO representatives, participated in these events.

In Toronto, Canada, the Canadian-Arab Federation also held a conference. Deported Palestinian Mayors Fahd Kawasme and Mohommed Milhem of Hebron and Halhoul urged the Canadian people to support Palestinian national rights.

Meanwhile, in occupied Palestine, students' demonstrations in Ramallah, Bir Zeit and Kalandia commemorated the anniversary of May 15. Israeli soldiers used tear gas to disperse the demonstrators. The soldiers broke into UNRWA's Kalandia Training Center to attack the demonstrators. Three students were wounded and 40 others were arrested and taken to the Mus Kobia Detention Center in Jerusalem.

Literature and Resources Available from the Palestine Information Office

Our Roots are Still Alive: The Story of the Palestinian People	\$5.45
The Palestinian Problem: An Annotated Bibliography 1967-80	1.00
Toward Peace in Palestine	1.00
Zionist/Israeli Acts of Terrorism 1939-81	1.00
Palestine's Poet: Abu Salma	1.00
International Declarations, Zionism and Racism	1.00
Camp David and Palestine	1.00
Samed Handicrafts	write for details
Films on Palestine	write for details
Palestinian Posters	write for details

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